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THOSE NOT ELECT

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THOSE NOT ELECT

by

LEONIE ADAMS

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To HENRIETTA ROZIER *and*
CHARLES FREDERIC ADAMS

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THOSE NOT ELECT

9 Those not Elect

NEVER, being damned, see Paradise.
The heart will sweeten at its look;
Nor hell was known, till Paradise
Our senses shook.

Never hear angels at laughter,
For how comports with grief to know
Wisdom in heaven bends to laughter, laughter,
Laughter upon woe?

Never fall dreaming on celestials,
Lest, bound in a ruinous place,
You turn to wander with celestials
Down holy space.

Never taste that fruit with the soul
Whereof the body may not eat,
Lest flesh at length lay waste the soul
In its sick heat.

9 Midsummer

THIS starbreak is celestial air,
Just silver; earthlight, dying amber.
Underneath an arch of pallor
Summer keeps her brightened chamber.

Bright beauty of the risen dust
And deep flood-mark of beauty pressed
Up from earth in lovely flower,
High against my lonely breast;

Thou rhythm like the changing moon's,
The catch to which the waters play,
That as they kiss moon-silver sink,—
As soon to spurn the baffled clay;

Only before the waters fall
Is Paradise shore for gaining now.
The grasses drink the berry-bright dew;
The small fruits jewel all the bough.

Heart-breaking summer beyond taste,
Ripeness and frost are soon to know;
But might such color hold the west,
And time, and time, be honey-slow!

¶ A Gull Goes Up

GULLS when they fly move in a liquid arc,
Still head, and wings that bend above the breast,
Covering its glitter with a cloak of dark,
Gulls fly. So as at last toward balm and rest,
Remembering wings, the desperate leave their earth,
Bear from their earth what there was ruinous-crossed,
Peace from distress, and love from nothing-worth,
Fast at the heart, its jewels of dear cost.
Gulls go up hushed to that entrancing flight,
With never a feather of all the body stirred.
So in an air less rare than longing might
The dream of flying lift a marble bird.
Desire it is that flies; then wings are freight
That only bear the feathered heart no weight.

9 Death and the Lady

DEATH to the Lady said,
While she to dancing-measure still
Would move, while beauties on her lay,
Simply as dews the buds do fill,
Death said, "Stay!
Tell me, Lady,
If in your breast the lively breath
May flicker for a little space,
What ransom will you give to Death,
Lady?" he said.
"Oh not one joy, oh not one grace,
And what is your will to my will?
I can outwit parched fancies still,"
To Death said the Lady.

Death to that Lady said,
When blood went numb and wearily,
"In innocency dear breath you drew,
And marrow and bloom you rendered me."
She said, "True."
"How now, Lady?"
"My heart sucked up its sweet at will,
Whose scent, when substance' sweet is past,
Is lovely still, is lovely still,
Death," she said.
"For bones' reprieve the dreams go last.
Soon, soon, your flowery show did part,
But precious I cull the heart."
Death said to the Lady.

[Death

Death to that Lady said,
“Is then not all our bargain done?
Or why do you beckon me so fast,
To chaffer for a skeleton
Flesh must cast,
Ghostly lady?”
“For, Death, that I would have you drain
From my dead heart the blood that stands
So chilly in the withered vein,
And, Death,” she said,
“Give my due bones into your hands.”
“Beauties I claim at morning-prime,
But the lack-lustre in good time,”
Death said to the Lady.

¶ *Bird and Bosom—Apocalyptic*

TURNING within the body, the ghostly part
Said, *When at last dissembling flesh is riven,*
A little instant when the flesh is cast,
Then thou most poor, steadfast, defeated heart,
Thou wilt stay dissolution, thou thus shriven,
And we be known at last.

This holy vision there shall be:
The desolate breast, the pinioned bird that sings;
The breast-bones whited ivory,
The bird more fair than phoenix-wings.
And hurt, more politic to shun,
It gentles only by its sighs,
And most on the forbidden one
Drop pity and love from the bird's eyes;
And what lips profit not to speak,
Is silver chords on the bird's beak.

Alas!

At the dream's end the ghostly member said,
Before these walls are rotted, which emmesh
That bird round, is the sweet bird dead.
The swan, they say,
An earthly bird,
Dies all upon a golden breath,
But here is heard
Only the body's rattle against death.
And cried, *No way, no way!*
And beat this way and that upon the flesh.

9 Prelude Pastoral

WE leant upon the bended hill,
Where turf is a sheer drop from heaven;
Each to each earth and sky were given,
And all the pointed grass was still
And drank the light till light brimmed even.

A honey milk its roots distil;
The suckling apples topple down;
Not waste, but wizard boughs, so soon
Cast fruitage little, wry and chill
For feasters by the dainty moon.

And dust to no gross thing gives room,
But only for the piercing grass,
The slender-stemmed, the violets, pass,
The crispèd curly clover-bloom,
And all is tiny flowers and grass.

We were too still to track the spring,
But pressed our ears upon a sound
Of waters quickening underground;
And if a lark shook out his wing,
That shadow on your cheek I found.

The morning like a rose began,
Rosy and drowsy grows the day;
Its peace will fold the heart away,
Whose thoughts like lambs in pastures ran
Within a bell's call all the day.

¶ Discourse with the Heart

I

YOU witless heart, that of your several beats
So braggart spend, die in a heavenly dream,
And own not any tainting of your sweets,
But in a spring immortal as you seem
Dip that you cherish; O inveterate heart,
You are too wilful to be born again,
Yield the spoilt garner up, and naked start.
Wisdoms shrink off like husks, but loves remain.
Not all the measure of the mind can move,
And love-gainsaying laws are lightly sped,
But your rash hold you keep, and for that love,
The instant-gift, these hourly drops are bled.
At heavens else, where death might never glance,
It was your angel took the toll, not chance.

II

LOVE is that innocent whom wounding thorn
Will never stop while violets might blow,
And they are tender; once was not wisdom born
Of wounds? But love's feet pierced are steadfast so.
Most dreamy, delicate, headlong wanderer,
Whose star is but some glitter-trick of tears,
Sleep, and my heart will fold you not to stir,
Like one left magic-drowsy, till bleak years
Are done, and the round rose-tree breaks in flowers,
And bees that brew such honey bear no stings,
And death without, like happy birds the hours,
Like birds, are caged in gold, and yet have wings.
Too docile princess! Love breaks sleep by this,
Each instant starting for the enchanted kiss.

III

GRIEVED hearts alone to lovers' hearts are kin,
That for no ransom brooded things forego,
If for queen's proudness one be sorrow's twin,
Or one like her disdain, love is so.
Since now most precious mines can give no gold
So absolute but it's made metaphor,
And richer metal by its shining told;
Nor best, nor beautiful, now the rapt love stir;
Heart, that have loved, nor known its holy part,
(Truth is, live hearts must love as lips shall breathe)
By this shall lift with sanctifying art
Your act of life, who live but to bequeath:
As lips that countless, graceless times have fed,
Save themselves hungry, and bite blessed bread.

G Play within a Play

THIS word was to a dreaming bosom brought,
How an old airy measure was now done,
But the strange heart with music not so soon,
But the once tremulous flutelike heart would give,
After a little catch to break the tune,
Harsh notes as anyone.

Love may not slight, I think, importunate ones,
And it was love's mercy and respite on that day,
She was where their jest is, they hold love high,
And those computers of the gusty street
Sit listening to words about a sigh,
And moan love's wrack in play.

And there from the ceaseless rivers of the blood
She caught for a little back love's hallowing shell,
And held it moonlike over moving time,
And saw one press the barbed love to her breast,
Young Juliet, and her tears a time
For pure love's pity fell.

¶ Thief of Paradise

THE heart that flowers in the side
Runs from a forbidden root,
And all the best the bosom bears
Is stolen fruit.

One was heard that told of love,
Blest mercy and ease.
But many and ruinous are the tongues,
And cry on these.

You have clasped a mortal liking,
And your bright glance bent on night,
Therefore stolen what was Time's,
Therefore have looked in despite.

How are you seeking love,
Being pointed to hate?
Or how given the wild gait of angels,
You haughty and desperate?

¶ The Three Visions

ONE who had married with the barren air,
Against the host of air now cries,
The breast cries out in despair. . . .
For gazing on still locks and lidless eyes
She had known the eyes gone blind,
All likelihood from the mad wit depart,
Because an idle longing staled the mind,
And withered the limbs, and hollowed out the heart.

The heart that would be passionate again
Knew winds that gathered against the breast;
It broke upon its pain;
And showed from its cold creature that it pressed,
Its clasp would never move;
And how the vision of the heart appears:
The tree was gaunt and bitterly there drove
About its roots the heavy fallen years.

And with that pest of dreams upon her blood,
She stretched a living finger where
Her live love before her stood,
And touched the hollows of the air;
And said, O last and mortal vision!
Now is my very marrow gone to dreaming,
And I am stricken by its dream's precision
To live bewildered between blood and seeming.

9 Companions of the Morass

I HAVE seen also your angel,
In the isolation where we had descended
To frequent the naked heart.
Many a time a dove from the thorny branches,
And now one dewy, feathery, tender,
From your eyes will start.

The earth is heavy, and the clouds drop rime,
And night descends without stars;
What does it see, white creature, what do you see, O eyes?
For so at the innocent lady's feet
The blond, the young, delicate ones of heaven,
Stare on the pretty painted skies.

It is a ground getting demons, but we call no honest demon,
We cannot conjure the swart breed;
The brooding devil at our heels has trod,
But it is he, lord of the circumscribed pit.
Here where holy and unholy are as weak as water,
We encounter the damned god.

It is said, by pinioning the angels
They keep the terrible footway; it is said,
The hardy have traversed the morass,
They that cast out devils to live without sin;
But we, coming between the devil ashamed
And a strayed angel, shall not pass.

[How

How shall we forsake this angel and this devil?
You bottomless tarnished lustre,
And bosom pressed upon the hollow cloud,
How do you visit us, symbols without body?
We are weak earth, we run before the wind
By which our hearts were bowed.

¶ Heaven's Paradox

HEAVEN, high heaven is given by grace,
And alway shall holy eyes
Look on ringed celestial space,
Seraph faces like thin pearl,
And the deep wells of Paradise.

They see Michael's burning shield,
Who but meek in gazing were,
And for their sable dark shall yield
Lustre mourned, and most his light,
Reft star and angel, Lucifer.

And bending boughs of God they love,
Where fruits for only love are given,
For tender moving, all that grove,
Whose passionate-come-by chrysoprase
In the seven wasting sins was shriven.

Some for disastrous jewels be;
His lambs, docility, and bliss;
Since lambs would shrivel hell to see,
And on heavenly roots to brood,
An elder, angels' woe is this.

With lips austerely sweetened these,
His filial ones beguiling, go—
A sidewise bitter smile that sees
Their darlings also the accursed,
By whose thefts came heaven so.

¶ Pity of the Heavens

LIGHT all day from heaven was streaming,
But the last hour gathered earth with light,
Seeping the darkened air with a blue color;
And now the stars from the lofty brow of the night
Regard the earth, regard the withering land;
And now fair snow comes dropping over her bosom,
Sky touching earth with a chaste hand.

Earth bears no more the print of her creatures' feet;
Dark breast, no more the glittering waters start;
The hare and the doe are uncherished in the wood;
She is numb, there is bitter armor on her heart.

But how profoundly would the heavens caress her,
With pity that hardly is reckoned from eye to eye,
And mouth on mouth is untold.
The amity of the skies has left their touch
So light, so pure, so cold.

O bosom carven upon the roses and pleasures,
Heaven cannot unlock your passions and your mirth,
But have you not perceived those eyes, mournful and bright,
How you are cherished by the countenance of the skies;
Is it not much, O earth?

¶ Said of the Earth and the Moon

Now moony light

The dews drink over the black turf,
And earth, at bottom darkness lying,
Looks up on heaven and heavenly night;
Stares on the glittering lady climbing
Her airy arch away,
Till a cold humour of her breast
Infests her clay.

The huntress of the air lets fly,
The beast of earth receives her arrow,
And by those silver arrows maimed,
The bones course with watery marrow.

Now fever-bright the dead moon goes,
The mistress to the sun, that crept
From starveling death, and on his breath
Has fed her lustre while her lover slept.

For the swart earth has breeded of her loves,
But the moon spent upon her withered shell;
And though the moon is barren, she's not cursed,
Nor the fruit unholy to be beautiful.

The stars were scattered at the edge of even,
Clouds may not snare her glittering heels tonight,
And still the amorous gold sun is sleeping,
The earth lies moored, she mounts the brink of heaven.

9 Night of Unshed Tears

SKIES have been bound with such pent airs.
The moon, that mad for brightness stares
Off the black bitter peak of night,
That purest curving crystal even,
Which wasted to a horn trails light,
Moves veiled and brooding over heaven
With cloud like heavy waters flowing,
And every burnished star sunk deep.
But though the heavens be proud, they weep.
The heaven has wept and thou hast known
Orion, the round liquid moon,
And all washt brightness showing.

g The Barouche.

SQUARES south the play was done:
Thick the housetops rise,
Hemming them; all their way
Northerly lies.

Drenched in sleep the cabman,
Drowsy-heeled the mare;
And half in sleep and dreaming,
Travel the fare.

Mournfully, sweetly so,
Midnight to morning goes,
When air has its honey
Of the lilac and rose.

Town is a blackened pool
Hooded with sleep;
And hooves are like bells
With night so deep.

Down every alley corner
Are heavenly gaps laid bare;
They see the clouds driving,
The moon runs there.

Their moon of warmest dusks,
And wasting in late skies,
Who now with perishing
Last silver flies.

[If

If he'd a penny given;
For the mare, sweet hay;
And they'd but faith to be
Merry that way.

¶ Merry Month of May

NOT the disembodied ones
Are spectres damnèd unto May.
For in and out of buried bones
Wind her roots the color of death;
For her petals, callow-gay,
Chill is in their dainty breath.

You that died, not false to her,
To a willow-chorus trim,
Shrink not for your mildew air,
Your dank turf locks, to print again
Her bosom—did but eyes grow dim,
The cheeks' roses—only—wane.

Nights that all night long are blue,
Days that the large stars fold in,
She binds her creatures to be true;
Then if flesh be fed and fine,
But those chords snapt, she cries on Sin,
And seals the sky with holy sign.

¶ At Tea One Bitter Afternoon

THE room is warm, the faces dream.
Out of each hushed and separate sense
Lips will drop words whose difference
No sharper on that air may seem,
Than margin flowers' variance,
That float and drown on one sweet stream.

The wax drops petals of ivory,
Delicate from a waxy swirl,
Smoke and the little trimmed fire curl;
Light for an inch runs amberly.
A lady with a rope of pearl,
Laughs, laughs and laughs and sips her tea.

Above her brows are curveted
Two dainty birds set beak to beak,
Two singing birds whose breasts are sleek.
Her hand, on which she leant her head,
Has left a rose upon her cheek.
Perhaps her birds will sing, though dead.

It is a spell that shuts us so,
Nor breaks so soon that we must see
Bleak light upon the wasted tree;
No, I was learned in spells, to know:
Now on dark wounds falls dreamily,
Like a celestial dew, the snow.

[By

By cold the moon was purged to be
Fairest of stars, and healèd so,
Like frost, earth's boughs in March shall blow.
We may not stir till, after tea,
The moon is there, and earth for snow,
As white, as luminous, as she.

9 Quiet

SINCE I took quiet to my breast
My heart lies in me, heavier
Than stone sunk fast in sluggish sand,
That the sea's self may never stir,
When she sweeps hungrily to land,
Since I took quiet to my breast.

Strange quiet, when I made thee guest,
My heart had countless strings to fret
Under a least wind's fingering.
How could I know I would forget
To catch breath at a gull's curved wing,
Strange quiet, when I made thee guest?

Thou, quiet, hast no gift of rest.
The pain that at thy healing fled
More dear was to my heart than pride.
Now for its loss my heart is dead,
And I keep horrid watch beside.
Thou, quiet, hast no gift of rest.

Spoken after Love

THAT wisdom or folly is not in the blood,
To stem its streams or bind them up from loss,
But all its liking goes upon the flood,
And that same flood will wash its gold from dross.
Having no hands to catch at rarities
Its commerce lies not in a merchant's kind,
And bidding ruin with each good it buys,
It drives a faster bargain than the mind.
The loves that run in it like alchemy
Are never bodily got, nor bodily spent,
And the wit decrying and by touch despised,
It reckons only, the gross use is by,—
Loving, possessing, marvelously content,
They are no more fumbling at the thing it prized.

¶ In Rhyming Sweet

WHAT so sweetly rhymed as woe,
Or as sorrow garlanded,
When of weeping eyes is said
The melancholy-pretty flow?
Tears the dust drank long ago,
Grief that got an easy bed,
What so sweetly rhymed as woe,
Or as sorrow garlanded?
Or who of reading rhymes would know
Cheeks with tears are gallèd so,
And those drops the eyes must shed,
In the breast are perfected?

What so sweetly rhymed as woe?

§ Spire of Saint Patrick's and the Moon

CITY of many, two in deep heaven are shown;
Two pearl, two ivory, two brimful light:
The lifting spire, and the spellbinding moon,
That weaves in silver the blue airs of night.
The streets are too live-lustre for her look,
The perished moon's that moves kissing the dead;
But this that the passion and the flesh forsook—
Mary the rose, and the archangels fled—
Is like unshrouded bones, the austere grace
Which, after the worms, its incorruption found.
O strange mortmain! that living have no place,
But that the dead are shuffled underground.
Earth is our mother, whose corrosive bed
From death to dust woos the disdainful dead.

g To the Waterfront Pigeons

CEASE to preen, O shining pigeons!
A jewel eye and breast of quiet,
Rainbow neck, will purchase here
Never nest nor wholesome diet.

What would these with muck and soot?
Or to what mortal use bestead
Dainty steppings and a foot
Coral-pink and ringleted?

Did you look, O airish flock,
Now when only breath comes cheap,
For only dirty drudging dock
Seven exquisites to keep?

Sweetings, then you have not known
How Beauty that the waters bred
Creeps up battered and alone
To precarious cup and bread.

Beauty's self, your holy mother,
Here sits not to a goddess' share.
She must live like any other
With no way but being fair.

Stealing up the morning alleys,
And who to tell she is not fraud?
Mortals now are grimly pressed,
That make Beauty to a bawd.

g Our Lady of Victory

Bread and Butter Letter from a Heretic

NO LATCH your housedoor kept, nor bar.
Within, you would be standing there,
Grave-eyed and silent as a star.
Touched with dim blue your robings were,
And met your gentle feet.
Large was your house, and cool, and fair,
All havoc at an end, and heat.

You would make welcome and not stir,
A bowl, serenely laid upon
Two palms, out to the wanderer,
Of your bright water's benison.
And, though I touched it not,
For old unquiet of your son,
Full rest your pointed hands begot.

And, humble now, I was let stay,
Watch your initiates about
Beauty of games they found to play
On the insurgent grave of doubt.
Your carven sympathy,
The wisdom the tool's trick struck out,
Fell upon these your lambs and me.

This grace there was in form and line,
An old benignancy they wrought
Out of such cry for peace as mine
Against the loneliness of thought.

[All

All things' insensate charm,
For complete me no balm had brought,—
Not birds along the fir tree's arm.

I had by heart green quietude,
And had been comforted within
The ancient lintel of the wood
By furred and secret minded kin;
There where least hint let slip
Of human puzzlement has been
To sully their blithe comradeship.

Now in its last and lonely seat
My heart had refuge without shame,
Here where all mortal passionate heat
Was trimmed into a simple flame.
Your face at least was true,
And the old rhymings of your name,
And thought at length was rest for you.

Sight

WHEN work was done I fed the working beast,
And passed the dead town in its misty shroud,
And saw streets run to stars, and in the east
The moon drift up as wavering as a cloud.
How many times ending the amber day
I'd walked with this flat heart and this dry stare,
And reckoning, with the chances of the way,
Beauty, that had no edges anywhere.
And loveliness, born fresh with every sun,
How blindly passed out of your gleaming air,
There where my poor dulled sands accounted run,
O how of morning made a thoroughfare!
And how forgot the mountainy wood this day,
Which the clear summoner day by day bereaves;
And through the shadowy air, as gently lay
The body of summer, drop its gilded leaves.
And for these hours, while dearest things decayed,
I am requited in a curious money,—
While fruits sucked up the sun, and birds late played,
And bees have sealed their wild, clear, yellow honey.

g Homcoming

WHEN I stepped homeward to my hill,
Dusk went before with quiet tread;
The bare laced branches of the trees
Were as a mist about its head.

Upon its leaf-brown breast the rocks
Like great grey sheep lay silentwise;
Between the birch trees' gleaming arms
The faint stars trembled in the skies.

The white brook met me halfway down,
And laughed as one that knew me well,
To whose more clear than crystal voice
The frost had joined a crystal spell.

The skies lay like pale-watered deep;
Dusk ran before me to its strand;
And cloudily leaned forth to touch
The moon's slow wonder with her hand.

¶ Hilltop Churchyards

THE living always held a valley dear
Where earth is gayer for the bloomy grass,
And waters deeply-pooled; and April here
Sooner the slenderest of lives will sow,
Flowers a breath would slay; and briefer pass
From this, the earth and bitter ebb of year:
And all the mourning of the blackened bough;
And ever against the withered season know
That drunken of the sun, the field,
A gold again for gold will yield.

Men always in a valley have drunk up
Their draught of life that it is death to drink,
So ever sweetest from its lovely cup.
But valley-dwellers, dying, have liked best
To rise from its enchantments to the brink
Of homely clay, that there earth open up
And close again their dust in her mute breast,
And offer them to heaven; and so rest,
With grave-stones highest, that the sky
Remember men, and where they lie.

And walking there I heard the tender earth
Call to that silent space in which she swings:
“Sky that did mock with dreams this delicate birth,
And puzzle it with stars, O wooing sky,
How shall you wake them? Not with trumpeting;

[Since

Since these celestial fosterlights kissed the earth,
Nor stir at morning for a feathery cry,
Nor tiny bluebells' tongues from where they lie;
Though these the sounds by which the ear
Has known that it is sweet to hear."

g A Wind of Fall

A WIND went forth a little after dawn,
And sounded his thin horn above the trees,
And there was sudden stilling of those bells
On which the treetoads rang quaint harmonies.

The languid mists upon the morning hills
Melted beneath that wind's swift icy breath;
Each tree took on a loveliness more keen
To taste the rare bright atmosphere of death.

Each leaf was as a gallant banner flown
For that far runner the wind heralded.
Would they not know the outflung delicate locks
Down all the ways the silver-limbed had fled?

Before the joy of that clear visioning
They had no sorrow, leaf and leaf, to part.
I cry the wind from out the clouds to blow
Through all the dusty summer of my heart.

§ Twilight of the Wood

LEAF is no more now than corruption's scent,
But beautiful are the trees above their dead,
This hour with their summer beauties spent,
When desolate of the thousand sweets they shed,
As to that last and western rite made bare,
Their boughs let drop the amber-yielding cup
That leaves no stain upon the crystal air;
And thinly in their midst a tune goes up:
Then who might sing in all the muted wood?
Its waters locked, no single bird, no leaf;
It is not higher than the living blood
Will sound in bodies stony-dull with grief;
And thus, when death has taken all the rest,
Life's self is heard within earth's icy breast.

Thought's End

I'D watched the hills drink the last color of light,
All shapes grow bright and wane on the pale air,
Till down the traitorous east there came the night,
And swept the circle of my seeing bare;
Its intimate beauty like a wanton's veil
Tore from the void as from an empty face.
I felt at being's rim all being fail,
And my one body pitted against space.
O heart more frightened than a wild bird's wings,
Beating at green, now is no fiery mark,
But heaven empty of accustomed things.
Be self no more against the flooding dark:
There thousandwise sown in that cloudy blot,
Stars that are worlds look out and see you not.

g Storm

THE moon has set a tawny sail;
Through the torn clouds the sudden stars
Flash the keen golden of their mail,
Or sweep their golden scimitars.

The hills drown in a ragged sea:
The birch tree trembles leaf to leaf,
All her white limbs in jeopardy,
And the pines shape the winds to grief.

There is a madness on the night,
As though all being cried out for close,
For one magnificence to smite
A planet and a sleeping rose;

*Cried: Surely now his hand were up
To stay the travail in this hour,
When dark has filled the valley's cup,
And dew the harebell's swaying flower.*

*O slaves to the primeval bond,
Surely he mocks us, or is not;
No perfectness there is beyond,
And much of perfectness forgot.*

*Since time was mother to this hour,
Shaping its gentle loveliness,
She dug the grave, and from her flower
Shed petals for its dusty dress.*

[All

*All things grow grey from breath to breath,
And now may bright disaster mate
Beauty to beauty in high death,
And the long dying consummate.*

g Death the Master

DEATH is master at this feast,
And our breath the fee to dine;
Light as morning from the east,
Feasting flesh from bone does twine.
Come, skinny death, let now the priest
By altar lambs be trimmed with vine.
Death is master at this feast,
And our breath the fee to dine.
Then had death bemoaned us least,
So the jesting never ceased;
Would rue like tender roses shine,
And the poison go like wine.

Death is master at this feast.

9 April Mortality

REBELLION shook an ancient dust,
And bones, bleached dry of rottenness,
Said: Heart, be bitter still, nor trust
The earth, the sky, in their bright dress.

Heart, heart, dost thou not break to know
This anguish thou wilt bear alone?
We sang of it an age ago,
And traced it dimly upon stone.

With all the drifting race of men
Thou also art begot to mourn
That she is crucified again,
The lonely Beauty yet unborn.

And if thou dreamest to have won
Some touch of her in permanence,
'Tis the old cheating of the sun,
The intricate lovely play of sense.

Be bitter still, remember how
Four petals, when a little breath
Of wind made stir the pear-tree bough,
Blew delicately down to death.

¶ On Senesis' Mummy

THEN, too, when beauteous Senesis
Lived, no lovely thing there was
Much less mortal than a rose,
And all dancing and all limbs
Had their dark and mortal close.

Lovers said then too of death
How more than the worm's mouth was owing
One that drew a flower of lust;
And then were no such churls to yield
Delicacy like hers to dust.

So perfect now and bodily
She lies, lapped in cedar-wood;
Her still breasts are garlanded,
And a gilded mask is over
Her cold, shapely, dreamless head.

O quick thing left thus as death stilled her,
O ebony-straight, the painted slaves
Still all the ritual treasure bring.
The mournful antique bodies make
A grave and lovely gesturing.

Surely then, too, when Senesis
Lived, life was a piercing thing;
Bright life on which long darkness wars;
And living then, to their brimmed hearts
Came a sweet wondering at stars.

[They

They learnt how soon the petals fall
On Egypt's or on any waters;
How being that suckles chilly fear
Is lovelier so, and dearest beauty
As brief a jewel as a tear.

How with this wisdom would they leave her,
A thousand and a thousand springs,
Lying with a stony heart,
Nor ever suffer her sweet breast
To drop as blossoms do apart?

g An Old Spell

HEARTS may not bend in course, but toward its loves,
Through heaping time, shall run the simple river;
And that enchantment that I lightly took
Out of the lovely April is for ever.

O falsely hearing, since of lying tunes,
Three notes were solitary, three apart,
That made of all the insolent armor wax,
Sank in the breast, and pierced the sensible heart;

And eyes forsworn, that, busied with your cheats,
Were fixed with tears, is not that only need,
Beauty's, the desolate wanderer of waste earth,
The sower in darkness of an exquisite seed?

These dropped like dew upon a dreaming flower
That in my breast stirred with delicious morn,
And breathed upon its color the bleak air,
And felt along its lovely side the thorn.

Not now will I turn from comfortless love again,
Nor, heart, forget the burden that you hold,
And flesh, though it harry you unto the last,
Go ridden through darkness to an end of gold.

G Spring Song

NEVER the sun may walk these shining skies,
Nor misted hills be looking to the light,
And body of dust to the ancient breath not rise,
The holy hand unseal dark sight.

I rose and looked upon the innocent earth;
Her breast was bloom, bright dew was on her head,
Her noise of larks that did forsake in birth
Shells delicate and enamellèd—

And rose and looked how daisy cheeks were clean,
Willows April-feathered, waters running and sweet,
And printing pasture grasses of unmown green,
The black ram's daughter with dewy feet.

This is that earth that of mortalities
Must her immortal April beauties take,
And lightly now the incurious candour sees
At its close heart the silent snake.

Dank ground that freshened to a pastoral,
The heaven sending you pellucid breath,
By all your streams unloosed in silver crying,
And blackthorn blooming on the boughs of death,

I swear I will forswear myself for mortal,
The heart give over sorrowing after sin.
From the bound heart the lover of the light
Leaps up and calls, *There is no death nor sin.*

¶ Never Enough of Living

NEVER, my heart, is there enough of living,
Since only in thee is loveliness so sweet pain;
Only for thee the willows will be giving
Their quiet fringes to the dreaming river;
Only for thee so the light grasses ever
Are hollowed by the print of windy feet,
And breathe hill weather on the misty plain;
And were no rapture of them in thy beat,
For every hour of sky :
Stillborn in gladness would the waters wear
Colors of air translucently,
And the stars sleep there.

Gently, my heart, nor let one moment ever
Be spilled from the brief fullness of thine urn.
Plunge in its exultation star and star,
Sea and plumed sea in turn.
O still, my heart, nor spill this moment ever.

¶ Exhortation

YOU ravening life, that eager for your sum,
Your instant self devour with each breath,
You do thus brand yourself with beggardom,
And all you are is owing unto death.
Learn dalliance that they cannot irk you from,
And preciousness' wont, and, as the proud are wise,
These baubles jostled with the next become
Singly as jewels twice worth Paradise.
Some that like you were over-arched with doom,
Royal ones, bitterly set on, held their ease,
And breath and bone, but not their pride, were beaten.
Graces you know, and graces should have room,
And beauty, pause; nor these, their courtesies,
The loutish time with all his sour unsweeten.

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